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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AGR-05

EB-07 OMB-01 TRSE-00 ORM-02 DHA-02 VO-03 INSE-00

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR EAGR
SUBJECT: ILLEGAL ALIENS: COLLECTIVIZATION ADVANCED AS LATEST
GOM TOOL FOR CURBING RURAL MIGRATION AND UNREST

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA HAS SENT TO CONGRESS DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO CONSTITUTION WHICH WOULD ESTABLISH FEDERALLY-RUN RURAL COLLECTIVIZATION AND URBAN PLANNING AS NATIONAL GOALS, AIMED AT CORRECTING RURAL-URBAN IMBALANCE AND CURBING OUT-MIGRATION. SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTING MEASURES NOT YET ANNOUNCED, BUT IMPLICATIONS FOR CURBING CAMPESINO MIGRATION TO U.S. ARE IMPORTANT. END SUMMARY.

2. TWO WEEKS AGO, PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA SENT TO CONGRESS DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO MEXICAN CONSTITUTION AIMED AT STRENGTHEN-ING FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY TO DEAL WITH RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION. AMENDMENTS ARE INTENDED TO COMPLEMENT RECENT LEGISLATIVE INIATIATIVES TO RESTRUCTURE CREDIT AND WATER-USE SYSTEMS IN PEASANTS' FAVOR. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS, WHICH WOULD REVISE THIRD PARAGRAPH OF ARTICLE 27, ARE KEYED TO STATE'S CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY TO REGULATE USE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY FOR PUBLIC INTEREST PURPOSES AND WOULD INCLUDE AMONG THESE PURPOSES ACHIEVEMENT OF BALANCED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND IMPROVE-
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MENT OF RURAL AND URBAN LIVING CONDITIONS.

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3. DRAFT AMENDMENTS WOULD PROVIDE FOR INCREASED GOVERNMENT REGULATORY ROLE WITH TWO THRUSTS: TO IMPOSE GREATER PLANNING IN URBAN AREAS AND SETTLEMENTS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE IMPROVED QUALITY OF LIFE, CONTROL GROWTH, AND PRESERVE NATURAL RESOURCES; AND TO STIMULATE COLLECTIVE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF EJIDOS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES, AS A MEANS OF CREATING DISINCENTIVES TO MIGRATING TO CITIES (OR TO U.S.). ALTHOUGH GOM ALREADY HAS, IN PRACTICAL TERMS, SUFFICIENT AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE PROGRAMS ALONG BOTH THESE LINES, CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT WOULD ELEVATE CONCERN OVER RURAL-URBAN IMBALANCE AND UNCONTROLLED MIGRATION TO LEVEL OF PERMANENT POLICY, CLARIFY FEDERAL AUTHORITY VIS-A-VIS STATE AND MUNICIPAL JURISDICTION--AND IN EFFECT IMPOSE ON ECHEVERRIA'S SUCCESSORS THE OBLIGATION TO IMPLEMENT HIS PROMISE TO IMPROVE LIFE IN THE CAMPO.

4. TWO GOM MINISTERS MOST DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH PROBLEM, BARRA GARCIA OF REFORMA AGRARIA AND MOYA PALENCIA OF GOVER-NACION, HELD PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWING PRESIDENT'S SIGNATURE OF MESSAGE TO CONGRESS. BARRA GARCIA DWELT HEAVILY UPON HOPES FOR COLLECTIVIZATION, NOTING THAT IN ITS EFFORT TO BREAK UP LARGE LAND HOLDINGS, AGRARIAN REFORM HAD PRODUCED ECONOMIC-ALLY DISASTROUS MINIFUNDIA WHEREIN SMALL HOLDERS WERE UNABLE TO SUSTAIN THEMSELVES, MUCH LESS PRODUCE FOR GROWING URBAN MARKETS. WITHOUT ECONOMIES OF SCALE, WITHOUT MARKETING SYSTEMS, WITHOUT SOCIAL AMENITIES, AND GENERALLY UNABLE TO OBTAIN CREDITS OR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, SMALL HOLDERS (WHETHER EJIDITARIOS OR PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS) HAD BEEN FORCED OFF THEIR LANDS AND INTO STREAM OF MIGRANTS. GOM, HE SAID, INTENDED TO TURN THIS STREAM AROUND BY ENCOURAGING "VOLUNTARY" COLLECTIVIZATION OF EJIDOS AND PROMOTING CREATION OF SMALL AND MEDIUM LABOR-INTENSIVE RURAL INDUSTRIES, AS MEANS OF ROOTING CAMPESINOS MORE FIRMLY TO THE LAND.

5. MOYA PALENCIA DESCRIBED PROBLEMS CREATED AT URBAN END OF MIGRATION TRAIL, WHERE CROWDING, SMOG, DISEASE-RIDDEN SLUMS, ABUSE OF NATURAL RESOURCES, OVER-TAXED SOCIAL SERVICES, AND CHRONIC UNEMPLOYMENT WERE INEVITABLE RESULT. VERY OFTEN, PROBLEMS WERE COMPOUNDED BY CONFLICITNG LEGAL OR MUNICPAL
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JURISDICTIONS, AS SLUMS SPREAD ACROSS CITY BOUNDARIES OR ONTO PRIVATELY HELD LANDS. CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS, HE SAID, WOULD PERMIT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO TAKE A MORE DIRECT HAND IN URBAN PLANNING AND ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES, COMPLEMENTING EFFORTS IN COUNTRYSIDE TO STEM MIGRATION.

6. ALTHOUGH RURAL COLLECTIVES HAVE OF COURSE BEEN ATTEMPTED AD HOC UNDER PAST GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS, MOST EYE-CATCHING

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FEATURE OF REFORM PROPOSALS WAS THAT OF ENSHRINING COLLECTIVI-
ZATION AS NATIONAL POLICY, AND DEBATE QUICKLY BROKE OUT OVER
ITS MERITS. GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED NATIONAL CAMPESINO CONFEDERA-
TION PREDICTABLY SAW COLLECTIVIZATION AS THE ONLY FORMULA
FOR RESTORING TRANQUILITY TO RESTIVE COUNTRYSIDE, AND CNC
LEADER SALCEDO MONTEON CALL FOR PROGRAMS TO UNITE EJIDITARIOS,
LANDLESS WORKERS, AND SMALL FARMERS IN COMMON GOVERNMENT-
PROMOTED INDUSTRIES. MAJOR OPPOSITION PARTY (CONSERVATIVE) ACCION
NACIONAL CHARGED GOVERNMENT WITH DEMAGOGY, WITH SEEKING TO
DESTROY SMALL LANDOWNERS, AND WITH UNDERCUTTING MEXICO'S
ABILITY TO FEED ITSELF--NOTING CORRECTLY THAT BULK OF
FOOD GROWN FOR MARKET WAS PRODUCED BY PRECISELY THOSE PRI-

VATE LANDOWNERS WHO FEEL THREATEND BY "MARXIST" COLLECTI-
VIZATION AND WHOSE ACCESS TO CREDIT IS ALREADY DWINDLING
AS GOM SHIFTS MORE RESOURCES TO EJIDOS.

7. AT OTHER EXTREME, SOMETIME RURAL AGITATOR RAMON DANZOS
PALOMINO CHARGED THAT GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS REALLY AIMED AT
HELPING ONLY THOSE FEW CAMPESINOS LUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE GOOD
LANDS AND PLENTIFUL WATER TO BEGIN WITH, THAT HUNDREDS OF
THOUSANDS MORE WERE STUCK WITH WORTHLESS LAND BEYOND HOPE
OF DEVELOPMENT, AND THAT GOVERNMENT COMPLETELY IGNORED PLIGHT
OF SOME FOUR MILLION LANDLESS FARM LABORERS. DANZOS' ALTER-
NATIVE REMEDY: UNION ORGANIZATION OF RURAL WORKERS TO FIGHT
FOR THEIR OWN INTERESTS.

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8. COMMENT: IN THEMSELVES, PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS WILL DO NO MORE THAN PAVE WAY FOR INCREASED GOM EFFORTS TO CORRECT URBAN-RURAL IMBALANCE AND THEIR IMPORTANCE WILL DEPEND ON FOLLOW-UP LEGISLATION AND PROGRAMS (SOME OF WHICH ARE ALREADY ON THE BOOKS) TO TURN RHETORIC INTO ACTION. IT IS EVIDENT, HOWEVER, THAT OVER PAST YEAR SINCE FORD-ECHEVERRIA MEETING, WHEN MEXICANS FINALLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION WAS A PRODUCT OF THEIR OWN RURAL PROBLEMS, SUBSTANTIAL NEW GOVERNMENT RESOURCES, EFFORT, AND ATTENTION HAVE BEEN CHANNELED INTO COUNTRYSIDE. MEXICANS RECOGNIZE THAT ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IS ONLY ONE ASPECT OF MUCH BROADER, MORE COMPLICATED RURAL SITUATION, AND IT WOULD BE FATUOUS OF US TO SUPPOSE THAT GOM EFFORTS IN COUNTRYSIDE ARE MAINLY A RESPONSE TO OUR OWN CONCERN WITH ILLEGALS . NEVERTHELESS, SOME MEXICAN EXPERTS AT LEAST ARE CONVINCED THAT THEY HAVE ALREADY HAD A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT IN REDUCING FLOW OF ILLEGALS TO U.S.

9. IT IS IN THIS SAME CONTEXT THAT CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS ARE SIGNIFICANT FOR OUR ILLEGAL ALEIN PROBLEM. THERE IS NO POINT IN OUR ENTERING DEBATE OVER WHETHER "COLLECTIVIZA-TION" IS PROPER OR SUITABLE THEORETICAL APPPROACH TO PROBLEM, NOR WHETHER CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS MIGHT LEND THEMSELVES
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TO ARBITRARY STATE CONTROL OVER FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT (WHICH THEY DO, OF COURSE). WHAT WE MUST WATCH, HOWEVER, IS WHETHER PROGRAM AND RESOURCES SUCCEED IN CREATING SUFFICIENT NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAMPESINOS AT GRASS-ROOTS LEVEL TO DETER THEM FROM ABANDONING THEIR HOMES AND MIGRATING-- EITHER TO MEXICAN CITIES OR TO U.S. BORDER. INDEED, A GOOD ARGUMENT CAN BE MADE THAT CAPITAL-INTENSIVE DEVELOPMENT COULD HAVE OPPOSITE SHORT-TERM EFFECT , BY REPLACING INEFFICIENT HUMANS WITH EFFICIENT MACHINES. AGRARIAN REFORM OFFICIALS PROFESS TO BE HEADED IN THE LABOR-INTENSIVE DIRECTION-- WE SHALL SEE.

10. DETAILED COMMENTS FOLLOW BY AIRGRAM.
CALDERHEAD

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